

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 AF-06 OPIC-03 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01 ACDA-05 /085 W

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P R 181335Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4650

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 6159

EO 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, MILI, PO

SUBJ: GOP REACTS TO PCP-FAR LEFT OFFENSIVE

REF: (A) USDAO 171630Z OCT 75, IR 6 879 0554 75

(B) USDAO 171631Z OCT 75, IR 6 879 0556 75

SUMMARY: GOP IS CONTINUING ITS UNDRAMATIC BUT STEADY EFFORT
TO MEET AND TURN THE COMMUNIST-FAR LEFT OFFENSIVE TO DESTROY THE
AZEVEDO ADMINISTRATION. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT, AS ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF, ON OCTOBER 17:

-- ACKNOWLEDGED DIVERSION OF MILITARY WEAPONS RETURNED FROM
COLONIES AND THEIR USE IN ATTACKS ON PROPERTY;

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-- STRESSED NEED TO MOBILIZE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE AND MILITARY TO

PREVENT "MARGINAL ELEMENTS" FROM TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE PEOPLES' PROGRESSIVE SYMPATHIES IN ORDER TO OBTAIN USE OF MILITARY WEAPONS;

-- ISSUED ORDERS TO ARMED FORCES TO

(A) INTENSIFY SEARCH FOR ARMS WHICH HAVE "DISAPPEARED";

(B) TAKE ACTION UNDER EXISTING LAW AGAINST THOSE ILLEGALLY IN POSSESSION OF MILITARY WEAPONS;

(C) EMPLOY ARMS AGAINST THOSE USING MILITARY WEAPONS AGAINST PEOPLE, ARMED FORCES, OR POLICE;

(D) PROCEED WITH INQUIRY INTO CIRCUMSTANCES OF WEAPONS DIVERSION; AND

-- APPEALED TO PORTUGUESE PEOPLE TO TURN IN WEAPONS DURING EIGHT-DAY AMNESTY PERIOD, AND TO INFORM AUTHORITIES OF ANY LEADS ON ILLEGAL WEAPONS.

2. REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ON MILITARY DISCIPLINE:

REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC) ISSUED COMMUNIQUE OCTOBER 17, REGARDING ITS ALL-NIGHT MEETING OF OCTOBER 16-17. RC STATED THAT IT HAD:

-- ANALYZED AND DEBATED POLITICAL-MILITARY SITUATION;

-- DETERMINED THAT ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, COPCON COMMANDER, AND REGIONAL MILITARY COMMANDERS SHOULD TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO REINFORCE UNITY, DISCIPLINE, AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MILITARY UNITS; -- HEARD EXPOSITION OF PIDE (FORMER POLITICAL POLICE) EXTINCTION COMMISSION;

-- CONSIDERED NOMINATION OF NEW HEADS OF POLICE (PSP) AND NATIONAL GUARD (GNR); AND

-- DECIDED TO NAME LT. COL. CASTRO ALVES AS PRESIDENT OF THE INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMISSION FOR PURGES AND RECLASSIFICATION. RC SPOKESMAN, VASCO LOURENCO, SAID THAT RC HAD ALSO DISCUSSED MILITARY INTERVENTION GROUP (AMI). IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS THAT A "RESTRICTED DOCUMENT" IS BEING CIRCULATED BY HAND AMONG OFFICERS AND SERGEANTS OF THREE SERVICES WITH APPROVAL OF PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES. DOCUMENT REPORTEDLY EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER MILITARY INDISCIPLINE, DIVERSION OF ARMS, PARTICIPATION OF UNIFORMED MILITARY IN RADICAL RALLIES, AND IRRESPONSIBLE STATEMENTS OF HIGH MILITARY OFFICIALS.

3. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MET OCTOBER 18 AND ISSUED STATEMENT WHICH AMONG OTHER POINTS:

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-- BACKED SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER ALMEIDA SANTOS BY EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER MEDIA'S REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF PRESS LAW, AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT STATE SUPPORT OF MEDIA COULD BE REDUCED TO A MINIMUM;

-- CONSTITUTED INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMISSION FROM MINISTRIES OF FINANCE, AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, AND INTERNAL COMMERCE TO TRAVEL TO AZORES AND MADEIRA TO CONDUCT STUDY OF PRINCIPAL PROBLEMS OF THOSE ISLANDS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE

RESPECTIVE REGIONAL JUNTAS.

4. OPORTO UNREST: RADICAL SOLDIERS, WHO HAD REACHED COMPROMISE AGREEMENT WITH ARMY CHIEF FABIAO TO WITHDRAW FROM OPORTO ARTILLERY REGIMENT (RASP) EARLIER THIS WEEK, PROTESTED ON OCTOBER 17 THAT NORTHERN MILITARY REGION (RMN) COMMANDER PIRES VELOSO HAD BROKEN AGREEMENT BY PLACING A NUMBER OF RASP OCCUPIERS ON LEAVE. RMN SPOKESMAN CLAIMED LEAVE WAS TO PROTECT RASP OCCUPIERS FROM OTHER TROOPS. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER PARTY (CDS), MEANWHILE, HELD FIRM ON PLANS TO RALLY OCTOBER 17 IN OPORTO DESPITE WARNINGS OF FAR LEFT PARTIES, AND DESPITE REQUEST OF MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES THAT CDS POSTPONE THEIR DEMONSTRATION. UPPERMOST IN EVERYBODY'S MIND IS FATE OF JANUARY 1975 CDS NATIONAL CONGRESS IN OPORTO, WHEN LEFT-WING RIOTERS HELD DELEGATES INSIDE BUILDING OVERNIGHT AND FORCED EARLY TERMINATION OF CONFERENCE.

5. FABIAO ON SKIDS? BRITISH ARMY ATTACHE TOLD ARMA THAT IN MEETING WITH ARMY CHIEF CARLOS FABIAO ON OCTOBER 17 HE FOUND FABIAO VIRTUALLY IN A STATE OF TEARS, DISTROUGHT AT THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS IMMINENT SACKING. FABIAO IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT FRG OCTOBER 27-30, AT INVITATION OF DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER. FABIAO TOLD BRITISH ATTACHE HE DID NOT THINK HE WOULD STILL BE IN OFFICE FOR VISIT. THE INDECISIVE FABIAO HAS BECOME A PRIME TARGET FOR THE MODERATES. PPD SECRETARY-GENERAL SA CARNEIRO HAS CALLED FOR HIS REMOVAL. OCTOBER 17 NEWSPAPER AND RADIO REPORTS WERE UNUSUALLY FRANK IN NOTING THAT REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC) MAY HAVE CALLED FOR FABIAO'S REPLACEMENT, AND PRESIDENT'S CHIEF OF CABINET TOLD DATT THAT FABIAO'S OUSTER WAS BEING CONSIDERED. (REF A.)

6. ALLEGED GONCALVES-LED COUP ATTEMPT PUBLICIZED: EMBASSY PPD SOURCE BELIEVES THAT RUMORED COUP ATTEMPT BY FORMER PM GONCALVES-LED GROUP OF LEFT-LEANING MILITARY (REF B) MAY HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE-CONFIDENTIAL

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LY SCOTCHED BY PUBLICATION OF PROPOSED COUP OUTLINE IN NEWSPAPER O JORNAL ON OCT 17. PRESS NOTES THAT GONCALVES MADE A "COURTESY VISIT" TO PRESIDENT ON OCT 17.

7. COMMENT: WITH THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON ARMS, RC CALL FOR DISCIPLINE IN THE ARMED FORCES, AND CABINET BACKING FOR INFORMATION MINISTER'S ATTEMPT TO CLEAN UP THE PRESS, GOP IS CONTINUING ITS UNDRAMATIC BUT STEADY EFFORT TO MEET AND TURN THE COMMUNIST-FAR LEFT OFFENSIVE TO DESTROY THE AZEVEDO ADMINISTRATION. WHETHER FABIAO IS TO BE SACKED OR NOT, HE APPARENTLY IS BEGINNING TO FEEL THE HEAT.
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